



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS, 1ST ENGINEER BATTALION**  
**FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442**

AFZN-BA-ECO

24 November 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Diehard Soldiers

SUBJECT: Policy Letter # 5 – Diehard 6 Command Philosophy

1. I am proud to once again be part of the "The oldest and most decorated Engineer Battalion in our Army". I have always found the battalion's combat history to be fascinating because of the Diehard's pivotal roles in the wars that our nation has fought and won. As we look to the future, we must be prepared to regenerate the battalion from its Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment to stand ready for the next time that our nation calls on the DieHards. Keys to success in this are the transition of personnel; the recovery and repair of our equipment; property accountability and requisition; and training into lethal platoons and companies.

2. Commander's Intent:

- a) Soldiering is a "team sport". We depend on each other to do the right things at the right time. We trust our lives in the professionalism and competence of our comrades. We need to be disciplined in our responsibilities to each other. This means having the self discipline to do the right thing when no one is watching because it is what is expected of us. We must trust each other and develop leaders at all levels to ensure that we are working at all levels as a "unit".
- b) The Noncommissioned Officers form the bedrock upon which our professional Army is built. These first line leaders have made and will continue to make life and death decisions for our soldiers. They know what the standards are and how to enforce them. Let them do their job.
- c) Maintenance is training for mechanized engineers. Without our equipment, we are at best, poorly armed infantry. Our equipment tends to be older and in smaller quantity on the modern battlefield. This requires us to devote a significant portion of our time to repairing it and training operators on how to drive and conduct operator level maintenance. I expect Commanders to "own" the maintenance of their equipment.
- d) In our Army, all soldiers are warriors and will live by the Warrior Ethos. This is a vital mindset since current and future conflicts will not have a front line but an area of operations. Soldiers must be able to effectively employ their weapon system and be familiar with the use of all crew served weapons. They must be confident in their ability to take the fight to the enemy and able to do so when the opportunity presents itself.
- e) Bad news does not get better with age. Come up on the net and let me know. I do not believe in "shooting the messenger". Tell me what has gone wrong and we can try to get things back on track sooner rather than later.
- f) We must be a learning organization. Everybody makes mistakes. We should learn from these mistakes collectively and avoid making the same mistakes twice. We acquire good judgement from making bad decisions and then learn how to do it better.

We can also learn from the mistakes of others. We should conduct after action reviews on all that we do and document what we have learned.

- g) Safety is everyone's business. Safety is the concerted process of analyzing, anticipating and applying control measures to reduce hazards that may result in the death or injury of soldiers. This applies equally in garrison and operational environments. We must ruthlessly enforce these control measures at all levels to protect our most precious resource, soldiers.
- h) If you are not sure of what to do, ask me. You may not always have enough information to figure things out. It is never my intent to withhold information. Knowledge is power but only if you share it with others. I intend to arm you with the information to plan and execute. If you are missing something ask for it.
- i) Staff officers do not say "NO" to commanders. We have all been down this road before. Some staff "Troll" has put a roadblock in your path. As staff you should explain why something can not be done and list others ways or the approved way to accomplish the task.
- j) Unit SOPs are what makes good units great. They are the recorded decisions of how we accomplish routine tasks. No additional orders are required. As we review the Diehard standard, drill books, etc and update them I challenge our many subject matter experts to insure that we have made changes for the better.

*ALWAYS FIRST!*

COMMANDER  
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